

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article comprising:
a liquid-permeable upper surface; and
an absorbent structure ~~exhibiting~~ having a planar extension;
wherein the absorbent structure comprises an acquisition layer and at least one storage layer;
wherein the acquisition layer comprises a plurality of fragments of a liquid-absorbing, open-celled, polyacrylate-based foam material;
wherein each fragment ~~exhibits~~ has a planar extension having a transversal direction and a longitudinal direction, and a thickness direction extending perpendicularly to the planar extension of the fragment;
wherein the width in the transversal direction ~~[[on]]~~ of each fragment in a dry condition does not exceed 10 millimeters; ~~[[and]]~~
wherein the total area of the fragments in dry condition in the planar extension is lower than the area of the absorbent structure in the planar extension; and
at least most of the fragments are arranged such that they are not touching adjacent fragments.

2. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein each fragment in a dry condition ~~exhibits~~ has a length in the transversal direction which does not exceed 7 millimeters.

3. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein each fragment in a dry condition ~~exhibits~~ has a length in the longitudinal direction which does not exceed 20 millimeters.

4. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the total area of the fragments in the planar extension of the fragment maximally is 50% of the total area of the absorbent structure in the planar extension.

5. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the total area of the fragments in the planar extension of the fragment maximally is 30% of the total area of the absorbent structure in the planar extension of the absorbent structure.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]] An~~ absorbent article ~~according to claim 1,~~ comprising:

a liquid-permeable upper surface; and

an absorbent structure having a planar extension;

wherein the absorbent structure comprises an acquisition layer and at least one storage layer;

wherein the acquisition layer comprises a plurality of fragments of a liquid-absorbing, open-celled, polyacrylate-based foam material;

wherein each fragment has a planar extension having a transversal direction and a longitudinal direction, and a thickness direction extending perpendicularly to the planar extension of the fragment;

wherein the width in the transversal direction of each fragment in a dry condition does not exceed 10 millimeters;

wherein the total area of the fragments in dry condition in the planar extension is lower than the area of the absorbent structure in the planar extension; and

wherein each fragment in a dry condition exhibits has a density of at least 0.18 g/cm³.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ An absorbent article ~~according claim 1,~~
comprising:

a liquid-permeable upper surface; and

an absorbent structure having a planar extension;

wherein the absorbent structure comprises an acquisition layer and at least one storage layer;

wherein the acquisition layer comprises a plurality of fragments of a liquid-absorbing, open-celled, polyacrylate-based foam material;

wherein each fragment has a planar extension having a transversal direction and a longitudinal direction, and a thickness direction extending perpendicularly to the planar extension of the fragment;

wherein the width in the transversal direction of each fragment in a dry condition does not exceed 10 millimeters;

wherein the total area of the fragments in dry condition in the planar extension is lower than the area of the absorbent structure in the planar extension; and

wherein the volume of each fragment is adapted such that upon wetting the volume increases by at least 500%.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ An absorbent article according to claim 1, comprising:

a liquid-permeable upper surface; and

an absorbent structure having a planar extension;

wherein the absorbent structure comprises an acquisition layer and at least one storage layer;

wherein the acquisition layer comprises a plurality of fragments of a liquid-absorbing, open-celled, polyacrylate-based foam material;

wherein each fragment has a planar extension having a transversal direction and a longitudinal direction, and a thickness direction extending perpendicularly to the planar extension of the fragment;

wherein the width in the transversal direction of each fragment in a dry condition does not exceed 10 millimeters;

wherein the total area of the fragments in dry condition in the planar extension is lower than the area of the absorbent structure in the planar extension; and

wherein the area in the planar extension of each fragment is adapted such that upon wetting the area in the planar extension increases by at least 300%.

9. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the fragments are applied against the upper surface of the storage layer in ~~[[the]]~~ a wetting area.

10. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the storage layers comprises cellulosic fibers and particulate superabsorbent, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ an amount of superabsorbent material calculated on the total weight of the storage layer in dry condition is at least 50 percent by weight.

11. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the storage layers comprises cellulosic fibers and particulate superabsorbent, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ an amount of superabsorbent material calculated on the total weight of the storage layer in dry condition is at least 70 percent by weight.

12. (Currently Amended) The absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the absorbent article is a diaper, an incontinence guard, or a sanitary napkin, ~~or the like~~.